

**24.1**

# Agreement Between Subjects and Verbs

## (Agreement with Singular and Plural Subjects) • Practice 1

**Agreement With Singular and Plural Subjects** A singular subject requires a singular verb. A plural subject requires a plural verb.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN SUBJECTS AND VERBS	
Singular	Plural
Our <u>car</u> usually <u>starts</u> easily.	The <u>students</u> <u>play</u> basketball on Thursdays.
<u>Jean</u> <u>collects</u> antique furniture.	According to the newspaper, <u>leaders</u> <u>are meeting</u> in Washington.

When a prepositional phrase comes between a subject and its verb, it does not affect subject-verb agreement.

A PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE SEPARATING A SUBJECT AND ITS VERB
That <u>book</u> of riddles <u>amuses</u> me.
The <u>magazines</u> on this shelf <u>belong</u> to me.

**Exercise 1** **Recognizing Subject-Verb Agreement.** Underline the subject of each sentence once. Then select the verb in parentheses that agrees with this subject and underline it twice.

**EXAMPLE:** The customers on the long line (wait, waits) patiently.

1. A delivery of eggs (arrive, arrives) early each morning.
2. The cafeteria (open, opens) at noon.
3. The tree near the tulips (shade, shades) the porch.
4. That old train station (looks, look) very familiar.
5. My aunt usually (send, sends) me a picture post card when she travels.
6. The invitations to the party (is, are) ready to send.
7. The children (walk, walks) to the meadow each day.
8. The people on the crowded street (rush, rushes) home.
9. Our weekly meetings (begin, begins) at 7:30 P.M.
10. The animals in the show (belong, belongs) to members of our club.

**Exercise 2** **Selecting Verbs that Agree with Singular and Plural Subjects.** For each sentence, underline the verb in parentheses that agrees with the subject. Then label the sentence S if the subject is singular and P if the subject is plural.

**EXAMPLE:** The chairs in the auditorium (is, are) new.        P

1. The members of the committee (speaks, speak) to us today. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The barn across from the stables (belong, belongs) to us. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Several men (assist, assists) us in the shop. \_\_\_\_\_
4. A cabinet filled with trophies (stand, stands) in the corner. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The tourists on the bus (admire, admires) the scenery. \_\_\_\_\_
6. The paintings along this wall (is, are) family portraits. \_\_\_\_\_
7. His idea really (interest, interests) me. \_\_\_\_\_
8. His plans to travel to Peru (sound, sounds) exciting. \_\_\_\_\_
9. The houses along the shore (is, are) vacant now. \_\_\_\_\_
10. The designer of all this clothing (live, lives) in Paris. \_\_\_\_\_

## 24.1

# Agreement Between Subjects and Verbs

## (Agreement with Singular and Plural Subjects) • Practice 2

**Exercise 1** Making Verbs Agree with Singular and Plural Subjects. For each of the following sentences, underline the correct verb of the two shown in parentheses.

**EXAMPLE:** The books on the shelf (was, were) dogeared.

- The wind always (makes, make) the screen door rattle during the summer.
- The keys to our house (is, are) on a ring just inside the garage.
- The geese (migrates, migrate) north every year at this time.
- My friends never (knows, know) what I will do next.
- A famous painting of those trees and windmills (hangs, hang) in the art museum.
- The parents of my best friend (has, have) invited me to the ballet.
- The silence (was, were) deafening after the prosecution rested its case.
- The secret of her many successes (lies, lie) in her diligence.
- Red roses on a white wooden trellis (blooms, bloom) in my aunt's lovely garden.
- The child with two sets of grandparents (enjoys, enjoy) the attention of many doting adults.
- The owner of the three dogs (hesitate, hesitates) before ringing the doorbell.
- The bees from the disturbed hive (buzz, buzzes) angrily around David's head.
- The peasants from that village (grind, grinds) corn by hand.
- The dogs in the neighbors' yard (growl, growls) at the baby.
- The active two-year-old near the swings (cause, causes) the accident.

**Exercise 2** Making Verbs Agree with Singular and Plural Subjects. For each sentence, underline the subject once, and underline the verb that agrees with the subject twice. Then label the sentence S if the subject is singular and P if the subject is plural.

**EXAMPLE:** The train (waits, wait) for only five minutes at this station. S

- A clattering sound on the roof (startle, startles) Mr. Malloy. \_\_\_\_\_
- Our victory over all the other teams (is, are) unexpected. \_\_\_\_\_
- The newspapers (give, gives) more details than I care to read. \_\_\_\_\_
- The girls' project (earn, earns) them a very good grade. \_\_\_\_\_
- The ostrich at the zoo (miss, misses) its natural home. \_\_\_\_\_
- Two painters (need, needs) two days to complete the job. \_\_\_\_\_
- The astronomers at the observatory (discover, discovers) another galaxy. \_\_\_\_\_
- For obvious reasons, the children (play, plays) inside today. \_\_\_\_\_
- The parrots in that large cage (squawk, squawks) at strangers. \_\_\_\_\_
- Magnets (attract, attracts) steel but not plastic. \_\_\_\_\_
- The medals on the old soldier's uniform (were, was) quite impressive. \_\_\_\_\_
- The mellow tones of the dance band (fill, fills) the air. \_\_\_\_\_
- Two lizards on one warm rock (sun, suns) themselves. \_\_\_\_\_
- One measure of this powder (make, makes) a gallon of juice. \_\_\_\_\_
- The liquid in these bottles (come, comes) from that vat. \_\_\_\_\_